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CONFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT

FINAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FOUR HUNDRED AND SIXTY-FIRST MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 2 April 1970, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. M. VEJVODA (Czechoslovakia)

(Previous verbatim records in this series appeared under the symbols ENDC/PV.1-ENDC/PV.430).

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PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Argentina:	Mr. C. ORTIZ de ROZAS
	Mr. A.F. DUMONT
	Mr. V.E. BERASATEGUI
Brazil:	Mr. R.E. SARAIVA GUERREIRO
	Mr. C.A. de SOUZA e SILVA
	Mr. L.F. PALMEIRA LAMPREIA
Bulgaria:	Mr. K. CHRISTOV
	Mr. T. PETROV
	Mr. I. PEINIRDJIEV
Burma:	U MAUNG MAUNG GYI
Canada:	Mr. G. IGNATIEFF
	Mr. R.W. CLARK
Czechoslovakia:	Mr. M. VEJVODA
	Mr. J. STRUCKA
	Mrs. Z. FIALOVA
Ethiopia:	Mr. A. ZELLEKE
Hungary:	Mr. I. KOMIVES
	Mr. J. PETRAN
	Mr. I. SARKADI
India:	Mr. M.A. HUSAIN
	Mr. N. KRISHNAN
	Mr. K.P. JAIN
Italy:	Mr. R. CARACCIOLO
	Mr. F.L. OTTIERI
	Mr. R. BORSARELLI
	Mr. U. PESTALOZZA

Japan:	Mr. I. ABE
	Mr. S. YAMADA
	Mr. H. OTSUKA
	Mr. J. SAKAMOTO
Mexico:	Mr. M. TELLO
Mongolia:	Mr. M. DUGERSUREN
	Mr. Z. ERENDO
Morocco:	Mr. A.T. BENHIMA
	Mr. M.A.A. KHATTABI
Netherlands:	Mr. H.F. ESCHAUZIER
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	Mr. T.O. HYDER
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	Mr. K. ZYBYLSKI
	Mr. H. STEPOSZ
	Mr. R. WLAZLO
Romania:	Mr. I. DATCU
	Mr. O. IONESCO
	Mr. V. PARASCHIV
	Mr. C. GEORGESCO
Sweden:	Mrs. A. MYRDAL
	Mr. A. EDELSTAM
	Mr. J. LUNDIN

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics:	Mr. A.A. ROSHCHIN
	Mr. V.V. SHOUSTOV
	Mr. L.A. MASTERKOV
	Mr. V.B. TOULINOV
United Arab Republic:	Mr. O. SIRRY
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United Kingdom:	Lord CHALFONT
	Mr. I.F. PORTER
	Mr. W.N. HILLIER-FRY
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United States of America:	Mr. J.F. LEONARD
	Mr. A.R. DAY
	Mr. W. GIVAN
	Mr. R.L. McCORMACK
Yugoslavia:	Mr. M. BOZINOVIC
	Mr. M. VUKOVIC
Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General:	Mr. W. EPSTEIN

1. The CHAIRMAN (Czechoslovakia): I declare open the 461st meeting of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament.

2. First of all, I would like to welcome the members of the Committee on their return from vacation, which I hope has been pleasant and enabled them to have a good rest so that we can continue with our work speedily and effectively.

3. Before calling on the first speaker I would like to welcome to our midst Ambassador Benhima, who has just arrived to take his place as representative of Morocco.

4. Mr. ROSHCHIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translation from Russian): First of all, may I be allowed to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your appointment to the post of representative of Czechoslovakia in our Committee. We wish you every success in your activities, which involve important tasks in the field of international policy and the security of States. May I also be allowed to congratulate Ambassador Benhima, who has also arrived in our midst to participate in our work as the representative of Morocco.

5. In today's statement the Soviet delegation would like to dwell on the problem of the prohibition of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons. We are gratified to note that this problem has occupied a prominent place in the work of the current session of the Committee. The intensive discussion of the question of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons at this session enables us to have a well-defined picture of the views of the member States regarding the direction in which we should proceed in order to carry out the task in this field and to sum up some preliminary results of the discussion now going on.

6. In point of fact, all the States members of the Committee have declared that chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons must be removed from military arsenals and that the prohibition of these agents of warfare must provide for the cessation of their development, production and stockpiling and for their destruction. In the opinion of most States, the starting point for all these measures regarding chemical and bacteriological weapons should be the Geneva Protocol of 1925 (A/7575/Rev.1, annex VI), which prohibits the use in war of all types of chemical and bacteriological agents. In these circumstances there is reason to hope that a

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positive result will be achieved in the matter of prohibiting chemical and bacteriological weapons. At the same time it would be wrong to close our eyes to the difficulties and divergent views which exist on a number of important questions of principle.

7. The basic difficulty which the Committee has encountered in solving the problem of the prohibition of chemical and bacteriological weapons, and which has in fact raised a barrier to the solution of that problem, is caused by the fact that some members of the Committee, namely the United States (CCD/PV.449, paras.23-31) and the United Kingdom (CCD/PV.451, para.18 et seq.), are in favour of a separate approach to the prohibition of chemical and bacteriological weapons, and in favour of elaborating at first an agreement dealing with biological weapons only. As regards the prohibition of chemical agents of warfare, they propose postponing the solution of this question indefinitely.

8. The Soviet delegation has repeatedly explained the fallacy and the danger of such an approach to the solution of the problem under consideration and has advanced arguments of a political, practical, scientific and military nature. We have pointed out that attempts to solve separately the problem of the prohibition of chemical and bacteriological weapons reflect in fact the desire to leave one type of those weapons, namely chemical agents of warfare outside the scope of the prohibition.

9. We are satisfied that many delegations share the point of view that chemical and bacteriological weapons should be prohibited together. The representative of Japan, Mr. Abe, in his statement on 10 March, said that "with regard to the scope of weapons to be prohibited, both chemical and biological weapons should be considered at the same time" (CCD/PV.456, para.82). Speaking in the Committee, the representative of Ethiopia, Mr. Zelleke, after having expressed himself in favour of the further strengthening of the Geneva Protocol of 1925, emphasized that so long as the prohibition of the production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological weapons follow the procedure of the Protocol, "chemical and biological weapons will remain inseparable" (CCD/PV.459, para.17). The representatives of India, the United Arab Republic, Pakistan and other countries have also expressed the view that it is necessary to take that approach to the prohibition of chemical and bacteriological warfare.

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10. The delegation of the Soviet Union would like to emphasize once again that it is our firm conviction that it is necessary to prohibit the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological weapons at the same time, within the framework of a single agreement, and that only such an approach will ensure the rapid and effective elimination of chemical and bacteriological agents of warfare from the life of the human community.

11. The delegations of the United States and the United Kingdom, with the support of some other delegations of Western countries, have developed the opposite concept and put forward arguments in favour of prohibiting biological weapons immediately, by means of a separate agreement, and have suggested that the prohibition of chemical weapons should be postponed to a later stage and form the subject of another agreement. The main argument in favour of such a solution to the problem advanced by the delegations of the United States and the United Kingdom is that biological agents of warfare, unlike chemical agents, have not yet been used on a large scale in war, that biological weapons are more dangerous than chemical weapons and that their use is highly problematical because from the military point of view it would be inexpedient in practice. The delegations of the United States and the United Kingdom argue that biological weapons are strategic weapons whereas chemical weapons are tactical ones, and therefore it is necessary -- so the argument runs -- to deal first with the prohibition of biological weapons. Finally, the prohibition of the production of chemical weapons, as the United States representative pointed out on 17 March, requires special forms of control different from those which could be used in respect of biological weapons (CCD/PV.458, para.57 et seq.).

12. We should like to stress that the argument in favour of the prohibition of chemical weapons after the prohibition of biological weapons and its formalization in a separate agreement because biological weapons have not yet been used in war whereas chemical warfare is already known to mankind, is devoid of logic. It would be more appropriate in these circumstances to speak of the need for the urgent prohibition of both chemical and biological weapons, since the consequences of their use in war are well known and since chemical agents, as becomes apparent also from the statement of the United States delegation, are regarded by a number of countries as being an important means of warfare suitable for practical use. It is no secret that certain types of chemical agents are being used for military purposes today, despite the fact that this constitutes a manifest violation of the standards of international law established by the Geneva Protocol of 1925 and has been rightly condemned throughout the world.

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13. We share the view expressed by the representative of India, Ambassador Husain, who said:

> "... we cannot accept the view that, because chemical weapons have on certain occasions been used in warfare and a number of countries have a chemical-warfare capability or are conducting research in this field, and of those countries some may wish to maintain chemical-weapons programmes to discourage the use against them of chemical warfare and to provide a retaliatory capability if deterrence fails -- so the argument runs -- we should confine our efforts to a ban on bacteriological (biological) weapons only." (CCD/PV.457, para.25)

14. The argument advanced by the United States and the United Kingdom that biological weapons are more dangerous than chemical weapons and that therefore their development, production and stockpiling should be prohibited separately and prior to the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons is, to our mind, equally unconvincing. The wars of our century have most clearly shown the great danger of chemical weapons which have already been used on a large scale and whose use in the First World War resulted in over 1 million casualties, of which over 100,000 were fatal. However, the point is not to contrast one type of weapon of mass destruction with the other but to prohibit both these means of warfare. In this connexion we should like to point out that the report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations on chemical and bacteriological weapons (A/7575/Rev.1) and that of a WHO group of consultants, Health Aspects of Chemical and Biological Weapons, contain a large number of impressive data indicating the great lethal power of both bacteriological (biological) and chemical weapons. The position of the Soviet Union is -- and in this respect we share the opinion of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and of outstanding experts known throughout the world, approved by resolutions of the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly (CCD/275) -- that both of these means of warfare are extremely dangerous, and we consider that they must be prohibited together since both are weapons of mass destruction aimed at the destruction of all living beings.

15. As an argument in favour of a separate solution of the question of the prohibition of chemical and bacteriological weapons the United States side has also advanced the thesis that it is necessary to have special forms of control over the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons, different from the forms of control over the prohibition of biological weapons.

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We do not consider this argument convincing. When it comes to the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological weapons whose production is directly linked with the peaceful production of chemical substances and bacteriological products, for both these types of weapons it is impossible to establish any international verification in the form of control posts and on-site inspections. In its intervention on 3 March the Soviet delegation has already shown how it would be possible to ensure the implementation of an agreement on the complete prohibition of chemical and bacteriological weapons (CCD/PV.454, paras.44 et seq.).

16. Nor is the United States argument well founded that it is a matter of first priority to prohibit biological weapons in view of the fact that they are allegedly strategic whereas chemical weapons are tactical. Thus in numerous international documents, including resolutions of the United Nations, nuclear, chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons have already been treated as weapons of mass destruction. Moreover, a distinction has never been made between biological weapons as strategic weapons and chemical weapons as tactical weapons. The designation of chemical means of warfare as tactical weapons would objectively lead to diminishing the importance of those types of weapons as weapons of mass destruction. Their destructive effects and the scale of their use could be as terrifying as those of biological weapons. That is precisely why chemical weapons have always been treated as one of the varieties of weapons of mass destruction which, like nuclear and biological weapons, pose a threat to the very existence of whole countries and nations.

17. In the course of the discussion a number of delegations have tried to find a compromise solution of the problem of the complete prohibition of chemical and bacteriological weapons which in their view would make it possible to overcome the existing differences in the approach to the solution of this problem. The idea has been put forward that it might be possible to work out two or more parallel agreements which could be considered simultaneously and together might cover the entire problem of the prohibition of chemical and bacteriological weapons. This suggestion gives rise to very serious and strong objections on our part, above all because of the reasons for which we insist

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on the need to solve the problem of the prohibition of chemical and bacteriological weapons within the framework of a single agreement. Furthermore, such a way of solving the problem appears very dangerous from the point of view of the possible consequences of a legal nature. It is easy to imagine, for instance, a situation in which some particular country or countries would ratify only one of the several agreements suggested. In that case the problem of the complete prohibition of chemical and bacteriological weapons would remain unresolved. A situation would be brought about in which one type of weapon -- that is, bacteriological (biological) -- would be prohibited while the other -- the chemical weapon -- would escape the ban. In that case it would, as it were, get the green light for its development, production and stockpiling, as well as for its use. Yet it is precisely our task to prevent and preclude the creation of such a situation. There are no grounds whatsoever for seeking to conclude two or more separate agreements on the prohibition of types of weapons so close to each other. Such a ban should be achieved by working out a single treaty document based on the concrete and very realistic proposals contained in the draft convention (A/7655) submitted by the nine socialist countries to the General Assembly of the United Nations.

18. One of the specific considerations regarding possible ways of solving the problem of the definitive prohibition of chemical and bacteriological weapons was put forward in this Committee by the representative of Sweden, Mrs. Myrdal. Having analysed various aspects of the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological agents of warfare, she drew the conclusion that "it seems possible to deal with them together to a considerable extent" (CCD/PV.457, para.57). At the same time, referring to the fact that there exists a certain group of chemical agents which are widely used to meet peaceful requirements but can also be used as weapons, the representative of Sweden expressed the view that the problem of the prohibition of their production for military purposes: "might be dealt with either in one comprehensive treaty with specified exemptions or in a separate treaty or protocol, where the restraining conditions could then be spelled out in more detail." (ibid., para.47)

19. The Soviet delegation considers that the questions to which the representative of Sweden, Mrs. Myrdal, has called our attention are solved sufficiently effectively in the draft convention proposed by the delegations of the socialist countries,

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particularly in articles 4 and 5 which provide for the adoption by the States parties to the convention of legislative measures relating to the prohibition of the production in those countries of chemical and bacteriological weapons and for the international responsibility of the national governments concerned for compliance with that prohibition. Article 3 of the draft treaty, which prohibits assisting other countries to acquire chemical and bacteriological weapons, in conjunction with articles 4 and 5 will ensure the solution of the problem of international trade in that type of chemical agents, which was also mentioned by Mrs. Myrdal.

20. In any case, the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons provided for in the draft convention proposed by the socialist countries relates only to weapons and is in no way intended to hinder the development of the chemical and biological industry for peaceful purposes.

21. In previous statements the Soviet delegation has commented in detail on the contents of the draft convention of the socialist States on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological weapons and on their destruction. In elaborating the draft convention the authors based themselves on the fact -- and this is stated in the preamble of the document -- that the guarantee of strict and scrupulous implementation of the existing prohibition of their use, as mentioned in the 1925 Geneva Protocol, remains an important aim of States in the field of chemical and bacteriological weapons. The preamble to the convention, while reaffirming the adherence of its parties to the purposes and principles of the Geneva Protocol, calls on all States to comply strictly with it. The draft convention also refers to General Assembly resolutions 2162 B (XXI) (ENDC/185) and 2454 A (XXIII) (ENDC/237) which condemned all actions contrary to the Geneva Protocol.

22. Today it is generally recognized that the 1925 Geneva Protocol is a most important and authoritative international document prohibiting the use of chemical and bacteriological weapons. The significance of the Protocol lies in the fact that it confirmed, as stated in its text, "to the end that this prohibition shall be universally accepted as a part of International Law ...", those principles which mankind had established long before that document came into existence. That Protocol

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has stood the test of time. It has proved itself a viable and important international agreement. In evaluating the 1925 Geneva Protocol, the representative of Hungary, Mr. Kömives, pointed out quite rightly that it "has acquired historical significance as an international instrument prohibiting the use of all chemical and bacteriological agents in war" (CCD/PV.456, para.20). In its resolution 2603 A (XXIV) the General Assembly once again confirmed its evaluation of the Geneva Protocol as an agreement which embodies the prohibition of all chemical and bacteriological means of warfare, without exception, as well as a rule of international law. Following the appeal of the United Nations General Assembly, a large number of States have acceded to that agreement. It must be noted, however, that even today not all States, among which are some militarily important States, have become parties to the Protocol.

23. We regard as unjustified, even dangerous, the endeavour of some delegations to give an arbitrary interpretation to the prohibition in the Geneva Protocol of 1925 -- as was done, for example, on 19 February in the statement of the representative of the United Kingdom, Lord Chalfont, who asserted that such chemical substances as CS gas, for instance, remained outside the prohibition (CCD/PV.451, paras.20-21). A similar tendency is contained in the statement made by the Canadian delegation on 24 March (CCD/PV.460, para.37), from which it appears that from the point of view of Canada the use or the prohibition of the use of tear gas and other similar agents in war is a problem which has not yet been solved, and that therefore the use of those agents is permissible. In our view such a problem does not exist. The use in war of all chemical and bacteriological agents without exception is quite definitely prohibited by the Geneva Protocol of 1925.

24. The Soviet delegation considers that any attempt to legalize the use of tear gas on the battlefield for so-called "humanitarian" reasons, which is what the representatives of certain States, including some in our Committee, are trying to lead up to, should be rejected in the most resolute manner. The report of the United Nations Secretary-General gives a clear and unambiguous reply in this regard:

> "It is true that a considerable effort has also been made to develop chemical agents which have as their purpose not to kill but to reduce a man's capacity to fight. Such agents are used by civil authorities of a number of

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countries in order to suppress disorders and to control riots, but when used in warfare they would inevitably be employed as an adjunct to other forms of attack, and their over-all effect might be lethal."
(A/7575/Rev.1, para.4)

25. Those are our considerations in connexion with the discussion in the Committee on the question of the prohibition of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons. In conclusion we should like to express the hope that the Committee on Disarmament will overcome the existing difficulties and complications and will achieve positive results in regard to the complete elimination from military arsenals of a dangerous group of weapons of mass destruction -- chemical and bacteriological agents of warfare. Our success along this path would be an important contribution to the strengthening of peace throughout the world. The great achievements of our time in the field of chemistry and biology must be placed at the service of mankind and not threaten its existence. The Soviet delegation is prepared, as always, to do all it can to facilitate the rapid achievement of this aim.

26. The CHAIRMAN (Czechoslovakia): I would now like to speak in my capacity as the representative of Czechoslovakia and to refer briefly to some aspects of the range of problems of chemical and bacteriological weapons as we see them, after having carefully studied the interventions of some delegations recently.

27. First of all, the speeches of some representatives seem again to reflect the tendency to separate the two types of weapons. That tendency is motivated by allegations that problems concerning chemical weapons are more complicated, inasmuch as those weapons have already been used and new types have been developed and are stockpiled in the arsenals of many countries, while problems concerning bacteriological weapons are less complicated, mainly because those weapons have not been used and are not being produced on a larger scale.

28. Whenever our present disarmament talks have been evaluated there has not infrequently been criticism of the fact that they deal mostly with prohibitions and limitations of those weapons which, so far, do not form part of world arsenals, while the weapons already used, produced and stockpiled are left on one side.

29. We believe it would not be correct to take the line of least resistance in the case of either chemical or bacteriological weapons; to seek solutions that would

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concern only bacteriological weapons and to postpone solution of the problems of chemical warfare. Moreover, on a number of occasions it has been pointed out here that the two categories of weapons are very closely connected. They are referred to in one context in the Geneva Protocol (A/7575/Rev.1, annex VI), in other international instruments such as the Paris Treaty of 23 October 1954 and the Austria Treaty of 15 May 1955, in both draft treaties on general and complete disarmament submitted by the USSR and the United States of America respectively (ENDC/2/Rev.1; ENDC/30 and Add.1-3), in the relevant resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly and in military manuals of almost all countries. Both types are weapons that do not discriminate between soldiers and civilians; they are weapons whose effects are uncontrollable and potentially unlimited. Both are weapons whose production and storage present special security problems. Both categories of weapons can be delivered by the same means. We might go on piling up similar arguments and we would be saying nothing particularly new. However, the most important and the most dangerous is the possible consequence of the enforced separation of the two types of weapons, that is, that the new convention on bacteriological weapons might be interpreted by some as encouragement for a build-up of chemical weapons.

30. In his speech on 17 March the representative of the United States, attempting to prove the necessity for separating chemical weapons from bacteriological means of warfare, said, inter alia:

> "... chemical weapons have obvious usefulness in certain military situations. Their military utility was demonstrated in the First World War when 100,000 military personnel on both sides were killed by poison gas and 1.2 million additional casualties were reported. Today many States are capable of producing modern nerve agents which are both more toxic and more adaptable to a variety of battlefield uses than are the First World War gases." (CCD/PV.458, para.58)

That seems to us to be an argument in favour of the necessity of a speedy prohibition of the production and stockpiling of chemical weapons, rather than one that would support separate solutions.

(The Chairman, Czechoslovakia)

31. In regard to verification which has been mentioned here so many times, it should be said first of all that chemical weapons have been prohibited by the Geneva Protocol for more than forty years now and the prohibition has been respected without any difficulty as to control. True, the Geneva Protocol prohibits only the use of weapons, not their development, production and stockpiling. When on 10 July 1969 the representative of the United Kingdom tabled and introduced the draft convention on the prohibition of biological weapons (ENDC/255) he pointed out to this Conference that "verification, in the sense in which that term is normally used in disarmament negotiations, is simply not possible in the field of biological warfare." (ENDC/PV.418, para. 21) We agree with that statement and we think that it holds true also in the case of chemical weapons. Problems of control of the two types of weapons are, after all, very similar. It is known, for example, that there exist types of chemical weapons which are practically developed in the air in the course of the track of a missile filled with two non-toxic agents, which are transformed into poisonous gas only shortly before the missile hits the target. Could we reasonably assume, unless there were agreement on general and complete disarmament, that a State would allow to be subjected to inspection its ammunition factories, ammunition assembly lines and all other processes of military production, which have been the object of strict military secrecy since time immemorial? On the other hand, we agree that there can be no agreement without control. However, we should find a method of control which would be effective and would correspond to the prevailing conditions. We await with the utmost interest the proposals of the Polish delegation in this connexion as referred to by the representative of the Polish People's Republic at the Committee's meeting on 24 February (CCD/PV.452, para. 18). At the present juncture I should like to point out that control, although necessary, must be realistic, and that demands for a method that would not correspond to the prevailing conditions must not become a pretext for rejecting agreement.

32. We are afraid that there is still another question that plays an important role in the attempts to separate the prohibition of the two types of weapons. In his intervention in this Committee on 17 March the representative of the United States stated that:

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"... biological weapons present a clear danger to mankind, especially to an unprotected civilian population. The effect of their use, however, would be difficult to predict ... Thus there can be no assurance that this form of warfare, if ever begun, would not spread uncontrollably to one's own population and to still other countries, as well as to the enemy." (CCD/PV.458, para.51)

That statement confirms the well-known fact that bacteriological weapons could eventually threaten even the population of a country which had used them. From that angle chemical weapons are more reliable. That, however, cannot be a reason for supporting agreement on a comprehensive prohibition of the former and refusing agreement on the prohibition of the latter.

33. Some representatives have recently mentioned the Geneva Protocol of 1925. This Committee has underlined its validity on a number of occasions. The Protocol has been acceded to by new States. It provides for the unequivocal prohibition of the use in war of asphyxiating, poisonous or other gases and of bacteriological methods of warfare. As was rightly pointed out by the representative of Pakistan on 4 September 1969, we should "... proceed from the point that the use of such weapons is already prohibited and that only the additional measures of prohibiting their development, production and stockpiling remain to be undertaken." (CCD/PV.434, para.65) We therefore think it necessary to reject the newly emerging arguments which de facto weaken the efficiency of the Protocol. It was proved here last year that the Protocol makes no differentiation between the less toxic and the so-called more toxic gases. It was the Czechoslovak delegation of that time which mentioned the fact that it had been stated in the British House of Commons as early as 1930, in reply to parliamentary questions on the Geneva Protocol, that the Protocol made no distinction between the less toxic and the more toxic gases, as it applied by its terms only to "war" and "warfare". I believe it would be superfluous to renew discussion on this subject.

34. Likewise we believe that we would hardly accomplish the task entrusted to us by the United Nations General Assembly if instead of reaching agreement on the comprehensive prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on the destruction of such weapons we were to agree only on a sort of declaration of no first use of chemical weapons. Such a declaration, at which some statements made in this Committee seem to be aiming, would not be tantamount to the

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complete elimination of chemical weapons from world arsenals, the urgency of which the General Assembly emphasized. When the non-proliferation Treaty (ENDC/226*) was being negotiated in this Committee we heard a number of convincing arguments stressing the importance of the least possible spread of such weapons and their least possible availability. That undoubtedly applies to other weapons of mass destruction as well, including chemical weapons. Once certain weapons form part of an arsenal there is no guarantee that they will not be used, or misused.

35. Accordingly we believe that the draft convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and on the destruction of such weapons submitted to the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly by the socialist countries (A/7655) provides the best solution to the problem before us.

36. Referring to the questions concerning that draft posed by the representative of the Netherlands on 17 March (CCD/PV.458, paras.42-43), we would like to make the following observations. First, the international responsibility of a State need not perforce be limited to the territory within which the State exercises its sovereign rights. It may also cover the activities of its nationals sent to the territory of other States, e.g. to military bases, and so on. Moreover, if a national of a State conducts activities which are not in harmony with the country's laws he may be called back home, and should he not comply he may be deprived of his citizenship. Secondly, in respect of the apprehension that the definition of the prohibition of production of chemical and bacteriological "weapons" permits too narrow an interpretation, we should like to point out that, on the other hand, the definition of the prohibition of chemical and bacteriological "agents" in its turn offers much too broad an interpretation. After all, many agents of that type are and will be produced also for civilian purposes. We might perhaps use the expression "agent of warfare" instead of the word "weapon". That, however, is a question of semantics and, therefore, not one of substance.

37. Before concluding, I should like to thank the representative of the Soviet Union for his warm words of welcome to me.

38. Mr. TELLO (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): Before reading out the very short statement which I intend to make on behalf of my delegation I should like to associate myself with the welcome expressed to you, Mr. Chairman, and to the representative of Morocco, who is joining us today.

(Mr. Tello, Mexico)

39. As a contribution to the study of one of the items on our agenda (CCD/274, p.3), on 24 March 1969 the Mexican delegation presented for the Committee's consideration a working document on the establishment of nuclear-free zones (ENDC/241). Subsequently, on 10 April 1969, the head of my delegation had the opportunity of presenting the working paper formally and commenting on its content (ENDC/PV.402, para.23). That is why I do not consider it necessary to repeat in detail the reasons which led my Government to the conviction that the establishment of such zones constitutes one of the best and most effective measures of nuclear disarmament.

40. The document which has been circulated today (CCD/241/Add.1) is in keeping with the offer made by Mr. García Robles in his statement on 26 February (CCD/PV.453, para.46) to bring up to date the information contained in document ENDC/241, in particular with respect to the status of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America, known as the Treaty of Tlatelolco (ENDC/186). Since the circulation of the working document a year ago the number of States which have ratified the Treaty and for which it is now in force has risen from ten to sixteen. During the same period OPANAL, the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America, provided for under article 7 of the Treaty, has been established and has started to function. Lastly, the addendum records the fact that the United Kingdom has become the first Power possessing nuclear weapons to deposit instruments of ratification of the Additional Protocols to the Treaty.

The Conference decided to issue the following communiqué:

"The Conference of the Committee on Disarmament today held its 461st plenary meeting in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, under the chairmanship of H.E. Ambassador Milous Vejvoda, representative of Czechoslovakia.

"Statements were made by the representatives of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Czechoslovakia and Mexico.

"The delegation of Mexico submitted an addendum to its working document on the establishment of nuclear-free zones (CCD/241/Add.1).

"The next meeting of the Conference will be held on Tuesday, 7 April 1970, at 10.30 a.m."

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.